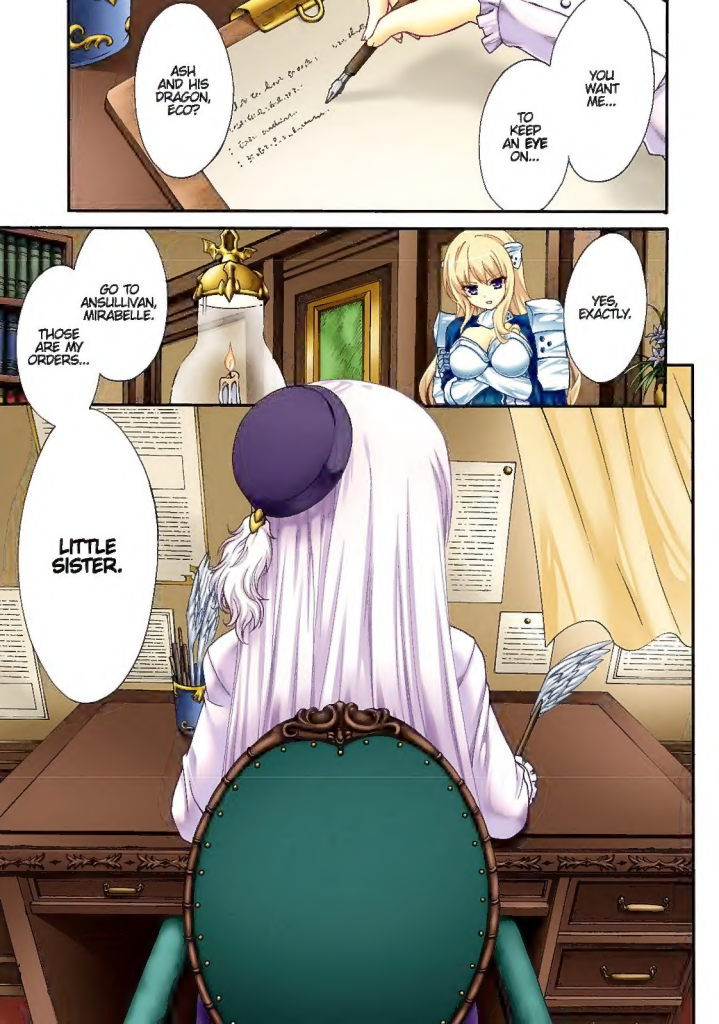
DRAGONAR
ACADEMY
ART BY
RAN
STORY BY
SHIKI MIZUCHI
8


ASH AND HIS DRAGON, ECO?
YOU WANT ME... TO KEEP AN EYE ON...
YES, EXACTLY.
GO TO ANSULLIVAN, MIRABELLE. THOSE ARE MY ORDERS...
LITTLE SISTER.

Chapter
XXXV
Mirabelle's Arrival

Chapter
XXXV
Mirabelle's Arrival

HMM. ALTHOUGH...
I SUPPOSE YOU'VE GOT YOUR HANDS FULL WITH YOUR OWN RESEARCH, DON'T YOU?
IN THAT CASE, I CAN SEND SOMEONE ELSE--
NO.
THAT WON'T BE NECESSARY. I'LL GO.
BUT...
I WILL, OF COURSE...
CONTINUE CONDUCTING MY RESEARCH WHILE I'M THERE.

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY
8
ART
RAN
STORY
SHIKI MIZUCHI
CHARACTER DESIGN
KOHADA SHIMESABA

SEVEN SEAS ENTERTAINMENT PRESENTS

DRAGONAR ACADEMY VOLUME 8

art by **RAN** / story by **SHIKI MIZUCHI** / character design by **KOHADA SHIMESABA**

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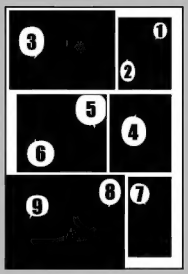
READING DIRECTIONS

This book reads from ***right to left***, Japanese style. If this is your first time reading manga, you start reading from the top right panel on each page and take it from there. If you get lost, just follow the numbered diagram here. It may seem backwards at first, but you'll get the hang of it! Have fun!!



Dragonar Academy
Cast of Characters

Ash Blake

A first-year Senios (upperclassman) at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy. He has the gift of riding any dragon. He's partnered with the young dragon Eco.

Eco

Despite her appearance, Eco is a dragon--and Ash's Steed! She's young and inexperienced, but was still able to craft an Ark for him.

Sylvia Lautreamont

The fourth princess of the Knightdom of Lautreamont. Known as the Ice Blue Princess, she is partnered to the Maestro dragon Lancelot.

Veronica Lautreamont

The first princess of the Knightdom of Lautreamont, and Sylvia's oldest sister. A mighty hero known as the Iron-Blooded Valkyrie, she blithely trades on her status as an undefeated, unparalleled warrior to do as she pleases.

Lucca Sarlinen

A third-year Yunios at Ansullivan Dragonar Academy, and a member of the warrior tribe of Ekblatt. She stopped attending classes when her dragon stopped permitting her to ride him.

Navi

A mysterious entity who appears in the Dragon's Workshop, a shared space constructed by the Holy Dragons long ago. Navi helps Eco build an Ark, and has been appearing in Ash's dreams.

The Dark Dragon King Mordred

One of two personalities that occupied Prince Julius' physical body while awaiting the opportunity to be fully resurrected. His "human" form bears an odd resemblance to Eco's...

Julius Lautreamont

The first prince of Lautreamont, who for years lived in the guise of the imperial soldier Milgauss after Mordred's soul stole his physical body. He was finally able to regain his freedom and control of his own body after Mordred's soul left to absorb Eco's power.

Anya

A girl who worked alongside Milgauss. As an operative for the Empire's intelligence service, she was undercover in the Knightdom.

Ansullivan Dragonar Academy: a school for boys and girls who've made pacts with dragons! Ash Blake is a student at the academy, but he's an embarrassment to the school--even though he has a Star Mark (the symbol of his pact), his dragon has yet to be born.
While Ash was participating in the Dragonar Festival of Aries, he was attacked and nearly killed by a man who seemed to be an imperial soldier. With Ash moments away from death, his Steed finally awakens. However, unlike all the other students' Steeds, Ash's dragon, who he names Eco, has the shape of a young human girl.
"YOU ARE NOT MY KEEPER! I AM YOUR KEEPER!!!"
SMILE
Ash and Eco try to settle into daily life together, but their efforts are thwarted when the town is attacked by a Necromancia! Ash, armored by the Ark Eco created for him and wielding the holy blade Aix-les-Bains, is able to counter the Necromancia's assault and protect Ansullivan!
SWOOH
DRAGONAR ACADEMY
THE STORY SO FAR

But then Eco is taken by the Empire, whose agents begin experimenting on her using a device called the Yggdrasil. While at their mercy, Eco finally awakens into her dragon form--a gargantuan creature that fills the sky.

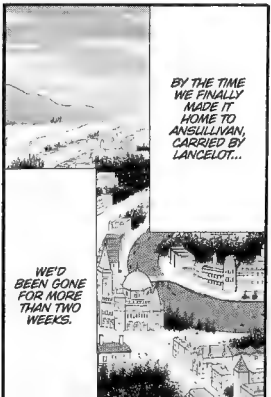
After returning to the academy, Ash and Eco are summoned by Sylvia's father--the Paladin Oswald, king of the knightdom! Once they reach the capital city, Fontaine, which is abuzz with excitement over the upcoming Elysium, they have an audience with Oswald...and the title of Dragonar is bestowed upon Ash!

When the Dark Dragon King Mordred--the mastermind behind all the machinations--attempts to seize the power Eco holds as the Imperial Princess of Avalon, Ash awakens to his own power as the Knight of Avalon and successfully vanquishes Mordred!

星刻の竜騎士

ANSULLIVAN DRAGONAR ACADEMY.
THE LAST DAY OF THE MONTH OF CANCER.

ECO AND I WENT THROUGH A TON OF INQUIRIES AND INTERVIEWS ABOUT THE EVENTS THERE.
AFTER EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENED IN FONTAINE...


BY THE TIME WE FINALLY MADE IT HOME TO ANSULLIVAN, CARRIED BY LANCELOT...
WE'D BEEN GONE FOR MORE THAN TWO WEEKS.

ONLY A HANDFUL OF PEOPLE KNOW WHAT REALLY HAPPENED.
THE SUBJECT OF HOW AN UNIDENTIFIED COLOSSAL DRAGON ATTACKED THE CAPITAL, RESULTING IN THE CANCELLATION OF THE ELYSIUM CONFERENCE, IS STILL A HOT TOPIC.

SERIOUSLY, CAN YOU BELIEVE IT? I JUST GOT BACK! HOW CAN IT BE GRADUATION ALREADY?!
YAWN ...!
WELL, WHY'D YOU GUYS STAY IN FONTAINE FOR SO LONG, HUH?
LOOK AT POOR ECO! SHE'S TOTALLY WORN OUT.
SNORE...
SHE'S ASLEEP ON HER FEET...
DRDDP
DRDDP
D-D-DON'T TELL ME YOU TWO FINALLY MADE ADULTS OF EACH OTHER...?!
Oooh, Ash...
FRET
FRET
I-I'm not a young dragon anymore...
NO--! HOW THE HECK DID YOU JUMP TO THAT CONCLUSION?!
BUT SOME-THING DID CHANGE BETWEEN US.
OUR BOND IS STRONGER NOW THAN IT'S EVER BEEN! WE'RE PARTNERS!

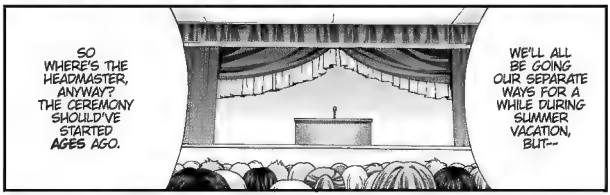
AND NOTHING CAN COME BETWEEN US...

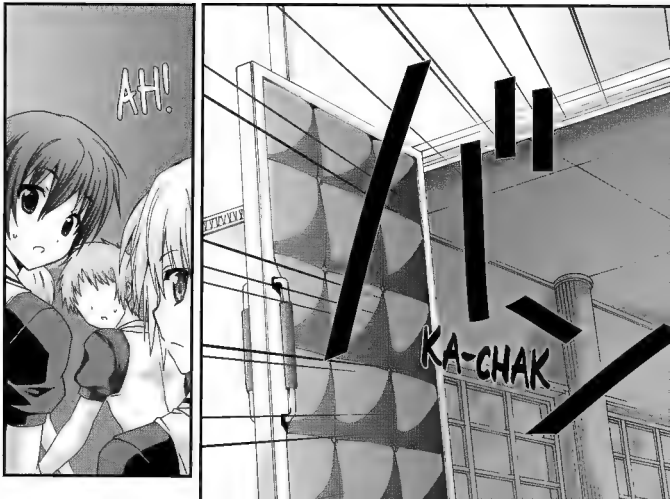
RIGHT, SORRY, MAX.
I'm ashamed of myself
YOU KNOW, MUCH AS I'D LIKE TO THINK YOU WEREN'T SOMEHOW INVOLVED IN THE RECENT EVENTS IN THE CAPITAL...
PRECEDENT AND LOGIC BOTH INDICATE THAT YOU ALMOST CERTAINLY WERE.

COULD YOU TWO KINDLY SHUT UP?
THE CEREMONY MAY NOT HAVE STARTED, BUT THIS IS STILL AN IMPORTANT DAY!

OH...
OH NO--- !!!
HOW DO YOU EXPECT ME TO NOT BE SUSPICIOUS WHEN YOU REACT LIKE THAT?!

I'M REALLY SORRY.
BUT I PROMISE I'LL FILL YOU GUYS IN ON ALL THE DETAILS... SOMEDAY.


WE'LL ALL BE GOING OUR SEPARATE WAYS FOR A WHILE DURING SUMMER VACATION, BUT---
SO WHERE'S THE HEADMASTER, ANYWAY? THE CEREMONY SHOULD'VE STARTED AGES AGO.

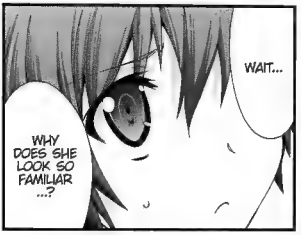

KA-CHAK
AH!

MURMUR MURMUR...
UM ...?
HUH? WHAT WAS THAT?
ROLL
ROLL
ROLL
TMP
TMP
TMP...

TAP
KLAK
KLAK
KLAK
TAP
STEP
STOP...
KLAK
KLAK
KLAK

GOOD DAY, STUDENTS.
I, MIRABELLE LALITREAMONT, THIRD PRINCESS OF OUR GLORIOUS KNIGHTDOM...
FSH
YOUR ATTENTION, PLEASE.
SHALL BE ASSUMING THE ROLE OF HEADMISTRESS HERE AT ANSULLIVAN DRAGONAR ACADEMY.
I LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING WITH YOU ALL.
FWP
BY ORDER OF MY ROYAL SISTER VERONICA LALITREA-MONT...

CHATTER


WAIT...
WHY DOES SHE LOOK SO FAMILIAR ...?

SERI-OUSLY ?!
WE'RE GETTING A PRINCESS FOR A NEW HEADMIS-TRESS?!
SHE'S GORGEOUS, WHICH IS AWESOME, BUT STILL!

SISTER! WH-WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS?!
BURST
LAST I HEARD, YOU WERE ABROAD STUDYING SACRED LAW AT ESPADA SHOHO UNIVERSITY!

OH! I RAN INTO HER IN THE HALL BACK AT THE PALACE...!
I HAD NO IDEA SHE WAS ONE OF THE PRIN-CESSES!!

ELINICE.
YES, YOUR HIGH-NESS?
GULP...
HOW MANY SISTERS DOES SYLVIA HAVE...?
HUH?
I DO BELIEVE IT'S TIME FOR TEA.
CER-TAINLY.
PLEASE TAKE A SEAT, HIGHNESS.

ER ...!
FRET
R-RIGHT, I... UM...
WHY ARE YOU HERE, SISTER? AND WHAT HAPPENED TO OUR HEADMASTER?
CLINK
NOW, THEN.
REMIND ME, SYLVIA...
WHAT WAS YOUR QUESTION?

WE SUPPLEMENTED HIS SAVINGS TO PROVIDE HIM WITH A COMFORTABLE RETIREMENT. YOU NEEDN'T WORRY.
WHAT ?!

Ahhhh... That is Ignorance
AH.
YOU MEAN THAT OLD MAN WITH A FOOT IN THE GRAVE?
AS WE SPEAK, HE'S ENJOYING THE AMENITIES AT A SUMMER RESORT IN CHEVRON.

BUT...
IT CAN'T BE A COINCIDENCE THAT THE THIRD PRINCESS IS HERE.
ESPECIALLY SINCE SHE SAID PRINCESS VERONICA SENT HER!

MURMUR MURMUR
ASH!
WHAT'S GOING ON?
I HAVEN'T REALLY FIGURED THAT OUT.

BUT, WE WERE ULTIMATELY ALLOWED TO LEAVE THE CAPITAL AND COME BACK TO THE ACADEMY.
DURING THE INQUIRIES INTO WHAT HAPPENED IN FONTAINE, THERE WAS TALK OF TREATING ECO AS A THREAT...

SO I'D SAY PRINCESS MIRABELLE MUST BE HERE TO KEEP AN EYE ON ECO!
I CAN'T SEE THAT BEING THE END OF IT, THOUGH...
DEAR ME.

SHE ARGUED THAT LETTING ECO RESUME HER LIFE HERE WOULD BE THE BEST WAY TO MINIMIZE THE RISK OF TRIGGERING ANOTHER TRANSFORMATION.
AND PRINCESS VERONICA HAD A LOT TO DO WITH THAT!

HOW ABSENTMINDED OF ME. I NEARLY FORGOT SOMETHING IMPORTANT.
MIGHT ASH BLAKE AND A YOUNG DRAGON BY THE NAME OF ECO BE PRESENT?

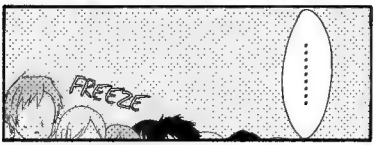
!!
TURN

RAISE
IF YOU'RE LOOKING FOR ME AND ECO...
WE'RE RIGHT HERE!!
.....
WH-WHAT'S WITH THEM?!
DO THEY WANT ME TO TRAMPLE THEM?!

MURMUR
MURMUR
ALL RIGHT.
COME FORWARD.
CLING...
……!
AS YOU WISH.
BRING ME MY RAPIER.
ECO ...?
CLINK
!
CLAK

WHOA, DID ASH DO SOMETHING WRONG?!
LIKE GET LUCKY WITH THE WRONG PERSON?!

GRIP


FREEZE
.....

SILENCE.

TAP
TAP
I BEAR A MESSAGE FROM MY FATHER, OSWALD.

RE-CENTLY...
HE BESTOWED UPON YOU THE SILVER WATCH THAT MARKS A DRAGONAR.
Y-YES! THAT'S TRUE!
HOWEVER, A FORMAL KNIGHTING CEREMONY WAS NOT CONDUCTED.
THEREFORE I, MIRABELLE LAUTREAMONT, IN MY FATHER'S STEAD, SHALL KNIGHT YOU.
O-OF COURSE!
BOTH OF YOU, KNEEL BEFORE ME.
ECO...
CRAP! ECO'S --!
SEE THE...
OH, FINE.
KNEEL
!

ECO...

I...
I'M ONLY...
DOING THIS FOR YOU, OKAY?
MUMBLE

AT WHICH TIME THE GREAT MOTHER DRAGON BLESSED YOUR FLESH WITH AN ORPHAN, THUS RENDERING YOU A BREEDER.
AND YOUR STEED, ECO, RESPONDED TO THE THOUGHTS OF HER MASTER AND ACHIEVED A MOST REMARKABLE GROWTH.

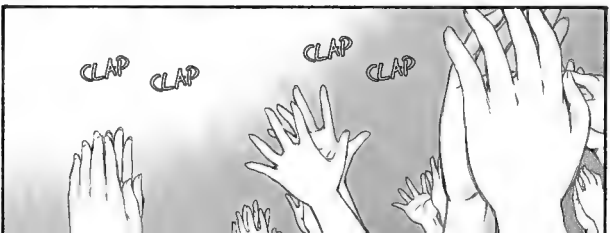
ANSULLIVAN DRAGONAR ACADEMY'S FIRST-YEAR SENIOS...
ASH BLAKE.
AT THE TENDER AGE OF SEVEN, YOU ENTERED ALBION FOREST, WHERE YOU PERFORMED THE ORPHAN CEREMONY...

NOW I, MIRABELLE LAUTREA-MONT...
IN THE NAME AND STEAD OF MY FATHER, THE PALADIN OSWALD...
DO YOU SOLEMNLY SWEAR...
TO PROUDLY SERVE THE KNIGHTDOM OF LAUTREAMONT?
DO GRANT YOU, ASH BLAKE, THE TITLE OF DRAGONAR.
CLANK
UPON THE STAR MARK I BEAR...
.....

CLACK

TWITCH
AND THE NAME OF MY BELOVED STEED...
I DO SO SWEAR.

YEEEEAAAAAAH!!!


CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

AFTER SO LONG AS THE SCHOOL'S "PROBLEM CHILD," I NEVER EVEN IMAGINED THE OTHER STUDENTS APPLAUDING FOR ME LIKE THAT.
SPLISH...
IT STILL BARELY FEELS REAL!
OF COURSE, THEN I HAD TO ANSWER A WHOLE BARRAGE OF QUESTIONS FROM EVERYONE.
Ow! My wounds still hurt.
BUT THAT MAKES SENSE, 'CAUSE TRADITIONALLY YOU CAN'T BECOME A DRAGONAR UNTIL YOUR STEED BECOMES A MAESTRO.
AND ECO STILL LOOKS THE WAY SHE DOES...
THAT WAS... AMAZING.
I'M SURE THEY'D ALL ACCEPT IT IMMEDIATELY IF THEY KNEW THAT ECO WAS THE MASSIVE DRAGON IN THE CAPITAL...
BUT I'M FORBIDDEN TO MENTION THAT TO EVEN MY CLOSEST FRIENDS.
SPLISH
NOW I HEAR THE ZEPHAROS EMPIRE IS DEMANDING THAT...
THE KNIGHTDOM TAKE RESPONSIBILITY FOR THE DESTRUCTION OF THE BEOWULF.

.....
I WONDER WHAT'S GONNA HAPPEN NOW.
SPLASH
WHEW...
I HAVE TO ADMIT, ALL I COULD THINK WHEN I HEARD HOW KLAUS HAD TO TRAVEL HOME IN A TINY HORSE-DRAWN CART AFTER LOSING THE SHIP WAS "SERVES HIM RIGHT."
EVEN THOUGH THEY TOTALLY BROUGHT THAT ON THEMSELVES!
I GET THE FEELING SHE MIGHT BE TRICKY TO DEAL WITH.
AND PRINCESS MIRABELLE ...
KA-CHAK
ECO!
SORRY I TOOK SO LONG---
TURN
BUT WHATEVER HAPPENS...
MY RESPONSIBILITY IS TO PROTECT ECO...!

!
ASH...
I ASKED COSETTE FOR SOME OF SYLVIA'S OLD NIGHTCLOTHES.
U-UM, WHATTRE YOU WEARING THAT FOR?!
I KNEW SOMETHING WAS OFF..
HUH?! WHY DO I FEEL SO UNEASY ALL OF A SUDDEN?
.....?!

BUT, UH... I THOUGHT YOU DIDN'T LIKE WEARING ANYTHING TO SLEEP.
THAT'S RIGHT.
I HATE IT!
BUT WHEN I'M NAKED...
EWW
YOU ALWAYS ACT SO WEIRD!
W-WEIRD ?!
I'M A GUY! I CAN'T HELP IT!
I DON'T REALLY...
UNDERSTAND WHY YOU FEEL STUFF LIKE THAT, BUT...
EITHER WAY...
I PUT ON THESE CLOTHES... LIKE A GIRL WOULD.
.....?

SO THAT MEANS...
YOU CAN COME OVER HERE WITH ME, RIGHT...?

H-HUH?

WH-WHAT ...?!
WHAT'RE YOU TALKING ABOUT?! WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT?!
Hey
STOP BEING STUPID! I PUT CLOTHING ON!
SO WHY'RE YOU STILL ACTING ALL STRANGE ?!

AND IT'S OBVIOUS WHAT I MEAN!
I'M SAYING IT'S OKAY FOR YOU TO SLEEP IN THE BED WITH ME!!
!

WH...
WHAT BROUGHT THIS ON?

HONES-TLY!
YOU'RE STILL WOUNDED!
AND IF YOU KEEP SLEEPING ON THE FLOOR, YOU WON'T HEAL UP PROPERLY! SO THERE!
JUST COME TO BED, WILL YOU?! SHEESH!

LIH...
OKAY...
IF... IF YOU REALLY DON'T MIND...
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
ECO...
SLIDE
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
TH-THMP

JUST...CALM DOWN, SELF! IT'S YOUR STEED BESIDE YOU! YOUR STEED!
UGH, IT'S NOT REALLY HELPING! NO WAY I CAN GET TO SLEEP LIKE THIS!
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
UM...
BACK WHEN... EVERYTHING HAPPENED... IN FONTAINE...
YOU WERE THINKING YOU'D MASTERED RIDING ME, WEREN'T YOU?

SORRY TO DISILLUSION YOU...
BUT I'M NEVER GONNA BECOME WHAT YOU EXPECT ME TO BE.
...!
DOES... DOES THAT MEAN YOU DIDN'T LIKE IT...?
THAT'S NOT IT!!
I'M STILL A DRAGON!
SO...SO WHAT I FELT WHEN WE WERE FINALLY LINKED LIKE THAT... WASN'T BAD AT ALL.
BUT...
BUT WHEN...
SIT
WHEN YOU WERE BEING KNIGHTED, YOU CALLED ME YOUR BELOVED STEED, RIGHT?

HEARING THAT MADE ME SO HAPPY!
BUT... IT'S NOT ENOUGH!
AND HEARING IT MADE ME SAD ...!

I'M YOUR STEED...
AND YOU'RE MY KNIGHT!
BUT THE MORE I THINK ABOUT HOW HAPPY THAT SHOULD MAKE ME... THE SADDER I FEEL.
I DON'T UNDER-STAND! I JUST DON'T!

WHEN I LOOK AT YOU, IT HURTS RIGHT HERE!
IT FEELS SO NICE, BUT IT HURTS! WHY?! IT MAKES ME FEEL MISERABLE!
AND...
ECO...
THESE FEELINGS AREN'T RECORDED ANYWHERE IN THE DRAGONWEISS.
DO YOU UNDERSTAND ...?

I THOUGHT I COULD SOMEHOW CONVINCE MYSELF THAT WAS ENOUGH.
SHE'S A DRAGON... AND MY STEED.
TH-THMP
ECO...
TH-THMP
TH-THMP
BUT, IT'S NOT WORKING OUT THAT WAY.
AS A GIRL, ALWAYS.
BUT ALSO...
I CONSTANTLY THOUGHT OF HER AS MY STEED...
SOME PART OF MY HEART WAS ALWAYS AWARE OF IT.

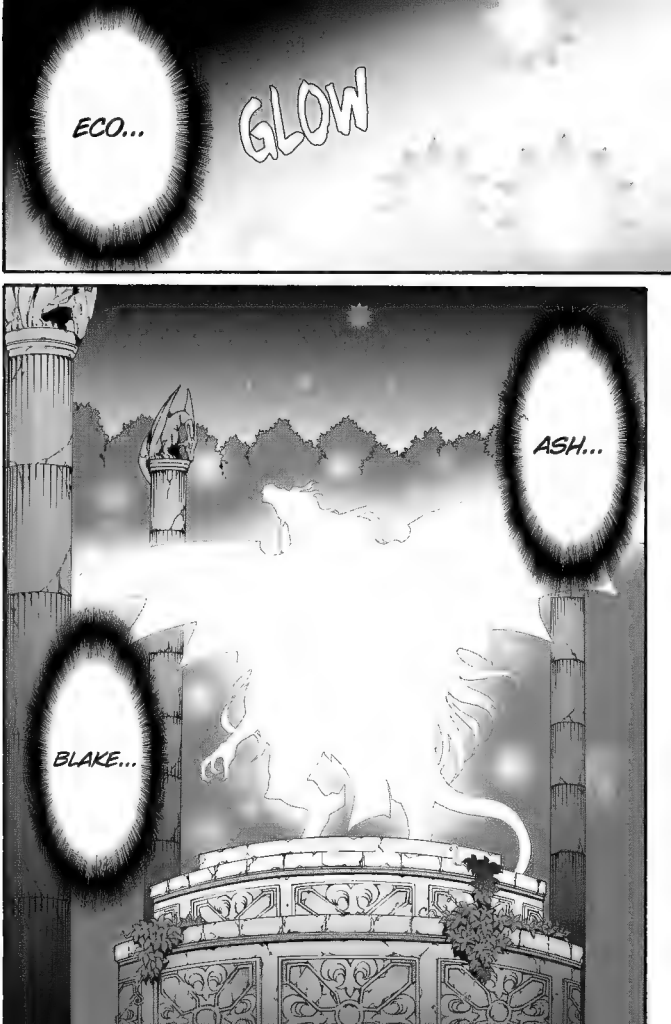
NO, YOU DUMBASS. DON'T WAVER NOW!
IT'S NOT LIKE...
I JUST STARTED FEELING THIS WAY TODAY!!
BUT IS THIS REALLY ALL RIGHT?
AND RIGHT NOW, SHE HASN'T HAD ANY ANSAR.

AND THE WHOLE TIME, MY FACE FELT LIKE IT WAS ON FIRE.
WE LAY THERE IN SILENCE UNTIL WE FINALLY FELL ASLEEP.
AFTER THAT, WE WERE TOO EMBAR-RASSED TO EVEN MEET EACH OTHER'S EYES.

THE ALBION FOREST.

CAW
CAW
CAW

ECO...


ECO...
GLOW
ASH...
BLAKE...

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

星刻の竜騎士

BANG
BANG
BANG
BANG
BRIIISH
GROGGY
WHA ...?!
WHAT THE HECK'S GOIN' ON SO EARLY?!
AT THE WINDOW...?
!!
NNN HHH...
MUMBLE
NGH...
UH ...?

Chapter XXXVI
The Tragedy of the Apollo House
WH...
WHAAAA?!!!
D-DRAGONS?!
GYAAAA?
ASH--!
HEE! ASH! ♡
WHY'RE THERE DRAGONS IN MY ROOM?! TWO OF THEM?!
SHUFFLE
GOOD MORNING! ♡
OH, GAWAIN! I TOLD YOU NOT TO POKE YOUR WHOLE HEAD IN...!

Chapter
XXXVI
The Tragedy of the Apollo House
WH...

WHAAAAA?!!!
D-DRAGONS?!
GRRRAAR
WHY'RE THERE DRAGONS IN MY ROOM?!
TWO OF THEM?!
HEE! ASH! ♡
ASH --!
SHUFFLE
GOOD MORNING! ♡
OH, GAWAIN! I TOLD YOU NOT TO POKE YOUR WHOLE HEAD IN...!

IN ORDER TO SEE YOU, ASH! ♡
BE MORE CONSIDERATE OF YOUR STEED, WILL YOU?!
RHIA AND I WILL GO ANYWHERE AT ALL...
WHAT THE HECK ARE YOU TWO DOING?!
AND HOW'D YOU EVEN GET RHIANNON IN HERE, JESSICA?!
SHE'S A HYDRA!
ASH, PLEASE HEAR ME OUT.
AND... I WANT TO INTRODUCE YOU TO MY FOSTER FATHER, OUR TRIBE LEADER--
HUH ?!
I'D LIKE YOU TO COME WITH ME WHEN I VISIT MY HOMELAND.
WAIT, WHAT DOES YOUR TRIBE LEADER HAVE TO DO WITH ANYTHING?!
AH --!
TWITCH
D...

DON'T MAKE ME...
BLUSH
SPELL IT OUT FOR YOU...
...?
SHOVE
OH, THAT'S SO NOT FAIR! ACTING ALL SWEET AND DOCILE TO GET MY GUARD DOWN SO YOU CAN MAKE YOUR MOVE?!
ASH! WHAT ARE YOUR PLANS FOR SUMMER BREAK?!
OH, RIGHT.
See ya!
MAX AND RAYMOND ARE BOTH HEADING HOME FOR THE SUMMER.
GUESS IT'S THAT TIME ALREADY.
BUT I'VE BEEN SO SWAMPED THAT I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO THINK ABOUT WHAT I'M DOING.

I'D LIKE TO BREATHE...!!
THE AIR OF MY HOMETOWN AGAIN.
HOW TALL ARE YOU BY NOW, LITTLE SISTER?
IT'S BEEN AGES SINCE I'VE SEEN MOM OR LINDA AT ALL.

WHAT?! WELL, IF YOU'RE STAYING, THEN I WILL TOO!
OH... IF I DON'T VISIT HOME SOON, MY FATHER WILL SCOLD ME.

ASH ...?
HUH? OH!
I NEVER GOT AROUND TO PUTTING IN A LEAVE REQUEST WITH THE ACADEMY, SO I DON'T THINK I CAN GO HOME.

?!
ACTUALLY, JESSICA...
YOU'LL BE COMING HOME WITH ME.

HOUSE RANDALL WILL PAY FOR THE BROKEN WINDOW, ASH.
MASTERS ARE RESPONSIBLE FOR THEIR SERVANTS, AFTER ALL.
REBECCA...!
AND CUCHULAINN!
ER...
HMPH!
I...I HAVE NO INTENTION OF BEING A MERE SERVANT TO HOUSE RANDALL FOR MY WHOLE LIFE!
SO STOP TREATING ME LIKE THE HELP!
OH, MY DEAR JESSICA! YOU'RE A CHERISHED CHILDHOOD FRIEND!
SWEAT
SWEAT
WHY ELSE WOULD YOUR PARENTS HAVE ASKED ME TO MAKE SURE TO TAKE CARE OF YOU, HMM?

THERE'S NO POINT DEFYING YOU, IS THERE?
THAT SMILE DOESN'T REACH YOUR EYES AT ALL.
SIGH...
CLEARLY IT'S MY DUTY...
TO SEE YOU SAFELY HOME.
BUT AT THE VERY LEAST, I HOPE YOU'LL SEE ME OFF, ASH--!
HUH? UH, SURE. I CAN DO THAT.
AH! REALLY?
IN THAT CASE...
REACH
?!
YOU SHOULD KNOW THAT IT'S MY HOMETOWN'S CUSTOM...
TO SEE SOMEONE OFF WITH A PARTING KISS. ♡
PUCKERING UP
WHA --?!!

FOR GOODNESS' SAKE, JESSICA!
POUT!
OUR HOMETOWN DOESN'T HAVE ANY CUSTOM OF THE SORT.
UGH! YOU'RE THE MOST TACTLESS PERSON EVER, REBECCA!!
BLUSH
AH... MIGHT I... ASK FOR THE SAME FAVOR?
HUH? SURE, I'LL SEE YOU OFF TOO, LUCCA.
I-IN THAT CASE, THE CUSTOM OF THE EKBLATT PEOPLE...
WOULD BE...
FOR YOU TO PRINCESS-CARRY ME...
BA-THUMP...
I'll wait for you forever!
P-PRINCESS-CARRY?!!
IF YOU WOULD.

OH --!
N-NO, THAT'S NOT IT! I WAS JUST...! I JUST... WANTED HIM TO SEE ME OFF, THAT'S ALL!

HEY! DON'T JUST CASUALLY SLIP THAT IN THERE!
AND BESIDES, I BET IT'S A SHAME-LESS LIE!
!
ER ...!

EEEE! HE WAS?!
GATHER
GATHER
AND DID YOU ALL KNOW THAT ASH WAS KNIGHTED AS A DRAGONAR YESTERDAY ?!
HE'S SO LUCKY...! AND HE LOOKED SO DASHING YESTERDAY, DIDN'T HE?!

HEY! EVERY-ONE, LOOK UP THERE!!
PRESIDENT REBECCA AND JESSICA AND LUCCA ARE ALL AT THE BOYS' DORM!!
ARE THEY TRYING TO SNEAK INTO ASH'S BEDROOM ?!!

HMM.
WEIRD--- A CHILL JUST WENT DOWN MY SPINE.
HA HA...
SO YOUR POPULARITY'S FINALLY IGNITED, HAS IT, ASH?
HUH?!
SHUDDER
SAME HERE!
I WANT HIM TO SEE ME OFF TOO, THEN!
HUH ...?
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
I WOULD'VE LIKED TO ASK YOU TO SEE ME OFF, TOO.
BESIDES...
WHAT'RE YOU--?
YOU MIGHT WANT TO STEP BACK INSIDE WITHOUT LOOKING DOWN. NEARLY THIRTY DRAGONS HAVE GATHERED ALREADY.
I WISH I COULD HOLD THEM BACK, OF COURSE, BUT I'M NOT SURE I COULD DO SO WITHOUT INJURING ANYONE.
UM...
ARE YOU SMIRKING...?

GAAAAAAAH!!!
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE
RUMBLE

I-I'M SORRY, ASH.
I HAVE TO GO.
A TRUE DRAGONAR WOULD HAVE TO RIDE OUT THIS STORM ALONE.
YEP.

YOU...
RAWR
RAWR
RAWR
DID YOU SERIOUSLY SLEEP THROUGH ALL OF THAT?!
HMM?
WHAT'S GOING ON?

CRACK
Q-QUIT IT, GUYS!
CRACK
YOU CAN'T ALL FIT IN HERE!
THE WALL'S GIVING WAY--!
AND WHILE YOU'RE AT IT, COME VISIT MY HOMETOWN!
ASH! SEE ME OFF TOO! ♡
FUSHU
FUSHU
NOOOO .....!!!
I-I WON'T BE DRIVEN OFF...!
OOOF!
UH...
KA-BOOM!
AAAARRRGH?!!
.....
I SEE.

AND THAT'S HOW HALF OF YOUR DORM ROOM CAME TO COLLAPSE, IS IT?
BATTERED...
YES'M.
THE CIRCUM-STANCES SEEM CLEAR.
THE ACADEMY WILL HANDLE THE REPAIRS.
I'VE SPOKEN WITH THE WORKERS OF THE TOWN...
AND THEY ESTIMATE THAT THE REPAIRS WILL BE COMPLETE IN TWO WEEKS.
TWO WEEKS, HUH?
THAT COULD BE A PROB-LEM.
I DIDN'T MAKE PLANS TO GO HOME THIS SUMMER...
SO I'M NOT SURE WHERE I CAN STAY FOR THAT LONG.
AH.

You're bound to get it dirty!
LENDING YOU A DRAGON IS ONE THING, BUT MY ROOM IS OUT OF THE QUESTION!
SORRY, MAN. THERE'S TOO MUCH IN THERE I DON'T WANT YOU TO SEE!
I SEE.
MIGHT YOU BE ABLE TO SLEEP IN A FRIEND'S ROOM WHILE THEY'RE AWAY?
WELL... I THOUGHT OF THAT, BUT...
SISTER !!!
HEY!! HOW LONG DO YOU EXPECT ME TO WAIT OUT IN THE HALL?!
WHY DID YOU SUMMON ASH TO MEET WITH YOU ALONE?!
THIS ALL HAPPENED BECAUSE THE FEMALE STUDENTS WERE SO RECKLESS! ASH ISN'T TO BLAME!
YOU TWO.

CALM DOWN IMMEDIATELY.
BURSTING INTO A ROOM WITHOUT KNOCKING IS TREMENDOUSLY RUDE.
BEING A PRINCESS--- HUMAN OR DRAGON--- IS NO EXCUSE FOR SUCH SHAMEFUL BEHAVIOR.
Er...
I-I'M SO SORRY, SISTER. FORGIVE ME.
Step
WHA ...?!
YOU!
YOU KNOW I'M THE IMPERIAL PRINCESS OF AVALON, BUT YOU STILL TAKE THAT TONE WITH ME?!
HOW WOULD YOU LIKE IT IF I TRAMPLED YOUR PALACE, HUH?
A PUNY CASTLE OR TWO WOULD BE NOTHING TO ME IN MY REAL FORM---

PLEASE !!
IF WORST CAME TO WORST, THEY MIGHT NOT ALLOW US TO STAY TOGETHER ANYMORE!
IF PRINCESS MIRABELLE IS HERE TO— OBSERVE ECO, THEN...
STOP THAT, ECO!!
GRAB
SHE DID IT AGAIN.
HUH ...?
IT'S SO STRANGE— ECO'S BEEN OBEYING ME PERIOD-ICALLY!
GLANCE
OH ...?
WELL, IF YOU SAY SO, I GUESS IT'S ALL RIGHT...

I ADMIT IT MAKES ME HAPPY, BUT IT KINDA THROWS ME, TOO.
I'LL LET IT PASS-- JUST THIS ONCE.
AND YOU'VE SAVED ME THE EFFORT OF SUMMONING YOU.
SYLVIA.
ABOUT YOUR ROOMS AT EPONA HOUSE, WHICH ARE RESERVED EXCLUSIVELY FOR ROYALTY.
YES?
WHAT ABOUT THEM ...?
?
IT IS MY DESIRE THAT YOU PERMIT THESE TWO TO LIVE THERE WHILE REPAIRS ARE CARRIED OUT.
HUH ...?
WH-WHAT?
PATCH
DON'T MAKE ME REPEAT MYSELF.
THIS IS AN ORDER FROM YOUR ELDER SISTER, AND NOT UP FOR DEBATE.

BUT...
BUT THAT ORDER CLEARLY GOES AGAINST OUR HOUSE'S MOTTO...
THAT SAYS KNIGHTS ARE NOT TO HAVE CARELESS CONTACT WITH THE OPPOSITE SEX!!
WHAT AN ODD THING TO SAY.
I MERELY INSTRUCTED YOU TO ALLOW ASH BLAKE AND ECO TO OCCUPY A PORTION OF YOUR RESIDENCE.
IN NO WAY DOES THAT SUGGEST "CONTACT" OF ANY SORT.
BLUSH
—!!
AND REALLY, SYLVIA, IF WE WANT TO BRING HOUSE MOTTOS INTO THIS, AS YOU SO LOVE TO DO...
FIDGET
TH...
UM...!
THAT'S...

MIGHT I REMIND YOU THAT ANOTHER MOTTO INSTRUCTS KNIGHTS TO DO WHATEVER THEY MAY TO EASE THE TROUBLES OF OTHERS?
I TRUST I'M REMEMBERING CORRECTLY?
THAT'S WHAT SHE SAID, BUT...
THIS DISCUSSION IS OVER. GOOD DAY.
OH DEAR.
MY PRECIOUS TEA'S GONE COLD.

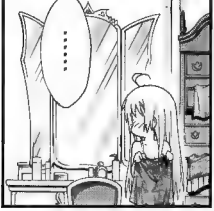
IF NOTHING ELSE, IT MEANS COSETTE WILL ALWAYS BE NEARBY...
AND SHE'LL PROBABLY GIVE YOU YUMMY THINGS ALL THE TIME.
WHY'S THAT?
ARE THE THREE OF US REALLY ALL GONNA LIVE IN THE PRINCESS'S ROOMS...?
I'M NOT KEEN ON THE IDEA.
RAWR!
YOU !!
HOW DARE YOU ASSUME I'M ALWAYS THINKING ABOUT FOOD?!
LISTEN!
IF YOU GET CARRIED AWAY AND DO ANYTHING WEIRD TO SYLVIA, I'LL TRAMPLE YOU! UNDERSTAND?!
HUH? "WEIRD"?! LIKE WHAT?!
WSH
I-I MEAN...
SOMETHING DIRTY !!!
POINT

HUH?!
KRAKOOM
WH-WHEN DID YOU LEARN ABOUT STUFF LIKE THAT?
Ha ha...
WOW, THAT WAS SHOCKING! ALTHOUGH... WE DID KISS...
HMPH! EVEN I KNOW THAT MUCH!
DON'T YOU DARE LOOK DOWN ON ME BECAUSE YOU STILL THINK OF ME AS A YOUNG DRAGON!!!
OHH, I SEE.
.....
I'm an adult now, remember!
ALL THESE UNCHARACTERISTIC THINGS SHE'S DOING...
MUST BE BECAUSE SHE'S GROWING UP.

.....
IT FEELS A BIT COMPLICATED...
BUT ECO WILL KEEP GROWING UP, WON'T SHE?
MY, MY! SOMEONE CERTAINLY SEEMS TO BE LOST IN A SWEET DAYDREAM!
TH-THMP
HUH ?!
BACK TO REALITY, ASH! ♡
HEE HEE!
WELCOME, BOTH OF YOU.
THE PRINCESS'S RESIDENCE IS RIGHT THIS WAY.

THE PRINCESS IS WAITING!
NOW THEN! ♡
WOW!
SO THE "ROOMS" RESERVED FOR ROYALTY...
ARE ACTUALLY A WHOLE SEPARATE BUILDING?!
I HAD NO IDEA!
Grrr...
OHHH, THIS WON'T DO AT ALL!
WHY CAN'T I CALM DOWN?!

.....
Ahhhhh...!
I SHOULD BE ACTING ENTIRELY NORMAL!!
AND WHY DO I KEEP WANTING TO DRESS UP?!
WHY IS MY HEART POUNDING?
IT'S ALMOST LIKE... THAT TIME.
STARTING TODAY...
I'LL BE LIVING WITH ASH...!


.....

WHEN I MET THAT BOY DURING THE ORPHAN CEREMONY...
AND WE WALKED THROUGH ALBION FOREST, HAND IN HAND.

GAH!
WHY AM I DAY-DREAMING?!

WOW!
WHAT A HUGE ENTRYWAY!
Murrr...

I CAN'T BELIEVE A CLASSMATE OF MINE LIVES HERE.
THE ENTRYWAY ALONE IS THE SIZE OF MY WHOLE DORM ROOM!
Ha ha...
OH MY.
IT SEEMS THE PRINCESS IS STILL IN A BACK ROOM.

I IMAGINE SHE'S FUSSING OVER WHAT TO WEAR.
I'LL GO CALL HER.
KINDLY WAIT HERE, YOU TWO! ♡

STOMP STOMP
HMM?
I STILL DON'T LIKE IT!

SO THIS IS REALLY HAPPENING...! WE'RE GOING TO BE SPENDING SUMMER BREAK UNDER THE SAME ROOF AS THE PRINCESS...?
.....
TH-THMP
TH-THMP

OH, WOW...!
ASH! LOOK AT THIS CUTE STUFFED ANIMAL! WHAT KIND IS IT?!
UM?

!!

HUH...?!
I FEEL... LIKE I'VE SEEN...
WHAT WAS THAT ...?
THIS STUFFED ANIMAL BEFORE!

DRAGONAR
ACADEMY

星刻の竜騎士

Chapter XXXVII
Memories
I DON'T GET IT.
THIS LOOKS SO FAMILIAR, LIKE THIS CAN'T BE MY FIRST TIME SEEING IT!
WHAT, THIS THING?
IT'S OBVIOUSLY MADE FOR A LITTLE GIRL, BUT I CAN'T SHAKE THE FEELING.
IT'S A PRETTY STRANGE STUFFED ANIMAL, TOO.
I JUST... GET FEELINGS LIKE THIS SOMETIMES.
Hmm...
I GUESS IT'S BECAUSE I'M MISSING SOME MEMORIES FROM MY CHILDHOOD.

I WENT TO ALBION FOREST FOR THE ORPHAN CEREMONY, BUT--
RIGHT AROUND WHEN I TURNED SEVEN...
YOU ARE?
YEAH.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, I DON'T REMEMBER ANYTHING ABOUT IT.
IT MUST'VE BEEN.
YOU MEAN WHEN THE MOTHER DRAGON PRESENTED ME TO YOU?
AND... IT FEELS LIKE I SAW THEM IN ALBION FOREST.
BUT JUST NOW, AN IMAGE OF THIS STUFFED ANIMAL AND A GIRL CARRYING IT FLICKERED THROUGH MY MIND.
HA HA! SORRY.
HOW COULD YOU FORGET SUCH AN IMPORTANT MOMENT?!

Hmm...
BUT THAT'S CRAZY, RIGHT? WHO'D CARRY A STUFFED ANIMAL INTO THE FOREST FOR THE CEREMONY?
HA HA HA!
A GIRL...?
THAT'S FINE...
SO, YOU'RE SAYING YOU LIKE THIS LITTLE GUY?
YOU ARE RIGHT?
UM... WELL...
JUST LOOK HOW CUTE IT IS!
BUT I WONDER WHY SOME PARTS ARE ALL WORN OUT, WHILE OTHER BITS ARE FRAYING?
WHY ISN'T SYLVIA TAKING BETTER CARE OF IT?
THE POOR THING!
GOOD POINT. IT DOES SEEM LIKE SHE WOULD.
HEE HEE!
BUT EITHER WAY, IT'S SOOOO CUTE!
LOOK, LOOK! WHEN I HOLD IT LIKE THIS...

IT'S ALMOST LIKE...
A BABY!

.....!
.....
ER...
DID YOU HEAR WHAT I JUST SAID?
HMM? NO, WHY?
TURN
YOU REALLY...
STARE
DIDN'T HEAR ME?
UH, NO?
.....

HRMM...
YOU'RE ACTING AWFULLY SUSPICIOUS.
COSETTE, YOU DUMMY!
WHY'D YOU GET THEM TO WAIT IN THAT ROOM?!
CLATTER
CLATTER
PLEASE WAIT, PRINCESS!
AH!
C-C'MON, ECO. LET'S SAY HI.
THERE'S SOMETHING IN THERE I DON'T WANT ANYONE TOUCHING!
PRINCESS!
CLATTER
THANKS FOR HAVING US--

BLUSH
HUH ...?
HMM ?!
ASH --!
HUH? WHAT?
S-SORRY !!
DASH
.....
AS I WAS SAYING, PRINCESS, YOU OUGHT TO HAVE DRESSED FIRST.
WHAT'S GOING ON? WHY'D HE LEAVE LIKE THAT?
WHAT A STRANGE BOY.
HUH?

WAS THIS SOME KIND OF...
GLARE
DELIBERATE ATTEMPT TO SEDUCE ASH?
UM, EXCUSE ME...
GAAAAH!!
I TOTALLY FORGOT!!!
COVER
OH, WHATEVER. I DON'T CARE ANYMORE.
OF... OF COURSE NOT!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, "SUSPICIOUS"?!
WHAT --?!
BUSH
IT'S SUSPICIOUS HOW OFTEN AWKWARD STUFF LIKE THIS HAPPENS TO YOU.
BEAM
IT'S ABOUT THIS!
WILL YOU GIVE IT TO ME?!
WHAT MATTERS IS...
I WANT TO ASK YOU A FAVOR!

IT'S ALL OLD AND RATTY, SO YOU PROBABLY DON'T WANT IT ANYWAY, RIGHT?
AND I KINDA FELL IN LOVE WITH IT ON THE SPOT.
WHAT ...?
.....
PRINCESS ...?
REMEMBER HOW I LET ASH TAP INTO MY POWER AND WE SAVED ANSLLLIVAN A LITTLE WHILE BACK?
BUT STILL, WHEN EVERYTHING HAPPENED RECENTLY, ALL ANYONE DID WAS TREAT ME LIKE I'M DANGEROUS! NO ONE RE-COGNIZED THE GOOD STUFF, NEVER MIND PRAISED ME!
SO THE VERY LEAST YOU COULD DO IS--
ECO...

GIVE. IT. BACK.
I SAID GIVE IT BACK!
THAT'S THE ONE THING I'LL NEVER, EVER PART WITH! NOT FOR ANYONE!!
HEY --!
YANK
WHAT'RE YOU DOING?!

LUNGE
NO MATTER WHAT...
I'M GETTING IT BACK!!!
WH...?!
WHAT'S WRONG WITH YOU? YOUR WHOLE FACE JUST WENT WEIRD...!!
N-NO!!
DART
I'LL NEVER GIVE IT BACK!!
PRINCESS! ECO!
WAIT!!
SCAMPER
SCAMPER

RAN OFF...!
THEY JUST...
HUH? WHAT THE HECK'S GOING ON ...?
...?
HUFF... HUFF...
YOU'RE... OUT OF PLACES TO RUN.
WHAT'S GOING ON?! YOU'RE USUALLY SO SERIOUS, BUT YOU'RE ALL WORKED UP...
OVER SOME STUFFED ANIMAL?!
IT'S MORE THAN THAT!!

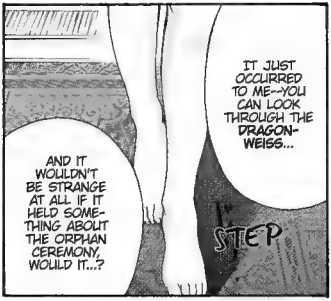
IT MEANS A LOT TO ME!
IT'S THE ONLY LINK I HAVE TO... TO SOMEONE I REMEMBER!
"SOMEONE YOU REMEMBER"?
BACK WHEN I WAS ABOUT SEVEN... WHEN I WENT TO PERFORM THE ORPHAN CEREMONY.
I SUPPOSE ANY SMALL CHILD WOULD FEEL ANXIOUS IN A VAST FOREST LIKE THAT, BUT...
IT'S SO PATHETIC, BUT I GOT COMPLETELY LOST DEEP IN THE FOREST.
THE ORPHAN CEREMONY ...?!
I WAS SO NERVOUS AND UPSET THAT I COULDN'T EVEN STAND UP ANYMORE!
I'D ALSO DROPPED MY BELOVED STUFFED DRAGON SOMEWHERE, AND COULDN'T FIND IT.
IT WAS WORSE THAN THAT!

AND...
HE GAVE ME SOMETHING.
HE CHEERED ME UP AND ENCOURAGED ME...
AND THEN...
MY STUFFED DRAGON!
THAT BOY FOUND ME.
BUT HE STILL PROTECTED IT SO CAREFULLY, EVEN IN A DANGEROUS PLACE LIKE THAT FOREST.
IT WAS JUST A TOY, AND NOT ONE THAT A BOY WOULD USUALLY BE INTERESTED IN.
I WAS REALLY TOUCHED.
BUT WHEN I SAW HIM WITH IT, AND HOW IT WAS SO PRISTINE AND BEAUTIFUL...
HE PROBABLY HAD NO IDEA THAT IT WAS MINE TO BEGIN WITH.

IT MADE ME SO HAPPY.
THE ORPHAN CEREMONY... A STUFFED ANIMAL...
A BOY... AND A GIRL...?
.....
THAT'S WHY I ASKED COSETTE TO MEND IT AS LITTLE AS POSSIBLE OVER THE YEARS.
I TREASURE IT SO MUCH, AND I WANT TO PRESERVE IT THE WAY IT WAS.
IT CAN'T BE.
IT'S SOME HUGE COINCI-DENCE, THAT'S ALL!
THERE'S NO WAY IT CAN BE ANYTHING BUT A COINCIDENCE!

WHAT...
ECO, ARE YOU... ARE YOU SAYING YOU KNOW SOMETHING...

HUH ?!
OF COURSE NOT! WHY WOULD I?!
ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO IT...?!


IT JUST OCCURRED TO ME--YOU CAN LOOK THROUGH THE DRAGON-WEISS...
STEP
AND IT WOULDN'T BE STRANGE AT ALL IF IT HELD SOME-THING ABOUT THE ORPHAN CEREMONY, WOULD IT...?

I DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT IT!
AND IF I DID, I WOULDN'T TELL YOU ANYWAY! SO THERE!!

BUMP
!!

TWIT
!
MUCH AS I DISLIKE FIGHTING, I DON'T SEEM TO HAVE A CHOICE NOW.
I CAN'T LET EVEN THE TINIEST CLUE SLIP THROUGH MY FINGERS--!!!
LUNGE
I SEE.
YOU GOING TO TELL ME EVERY-THING YOU KNOW!
WH-WHAT?! NO--!!

I FINALLY CAUGHT YOU...!!
HUFF... HUFF...
GET OFF ME --!!!
AS IF I'D LET YOU GO THAT EASILY!!

AND EVEN THOUGH WE HAVEN'T KNOWN EACH OTHER THAT LONG, I CONSIDER YOU A FRIEND!
SO PLEASE !!!
I FEEL TERRIBLE FOR DOING IT, HONESTLY...
YOU EVEN USED AN ORACLE!
THAT WASN'T FAIR AT ALL!
AND NOW MY CLOTHES ARE RUINED!
I KNOW IT WASN'T FAIR!!
ASH ...!!
WHATEVER YOU KNOW, HOWEVER YOU KNOW IT--
PRIN-CESS!!

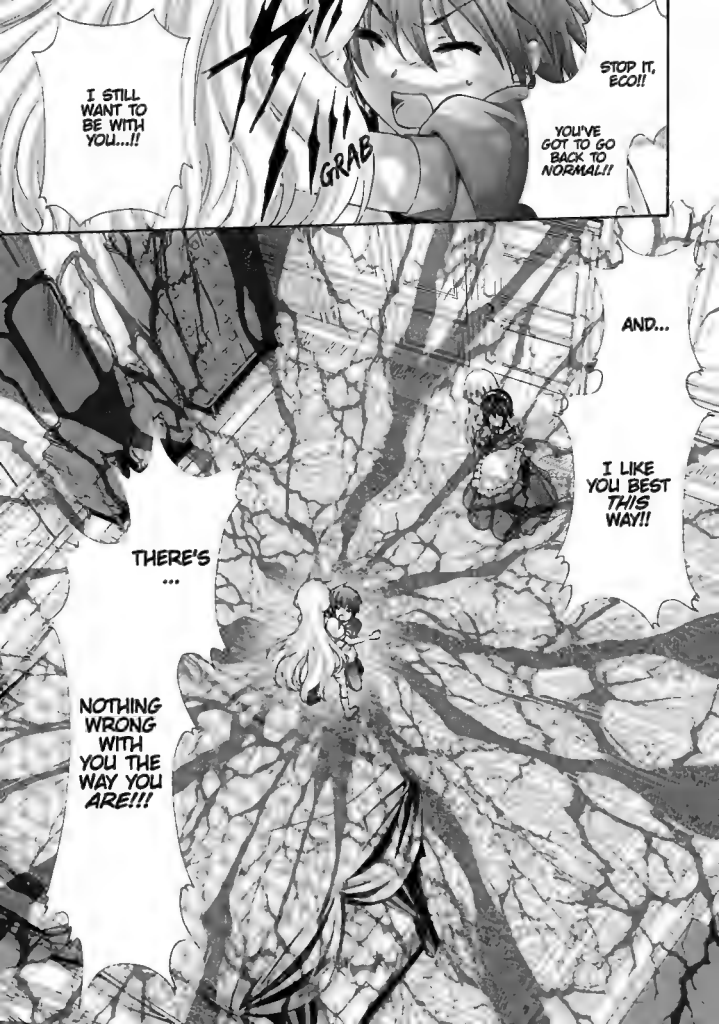
WHAT ARE YOU DOING ...?!
THIS ISN'T LIKE YOU AT ALL, PRINCESS! NO MATTER WHAT YOUR REASONS ARE!!
VWMMM
WAIT!! I-I WASN'T GOING TO HURT HER...
!!!
ASH'S STAR MARK...
IT'S FLICKERING ...!!!!

I...
I'VE BEHAVED SO SELF-ISHLY!
SO SHE REACHED OUT TO ASH FOR HELP...!!
I HAD NO INTENTION OF HURTING HER, BUT ECO FELT THREAT-ENED...
BUT...
I STILL CAN'T BACK DOWN ON THIS!!
PLEASE, ECO!!!

ECO! HEY!
...?
ECO ...?!
WHAT IS IT?!
ECO'S ACTING FUNNY ...!!!
SOME-THING'S WRONG!!
PRIN-CESS...
WHY ARE YOU SO DESPERATE ABOUT THIS?
WHAM
PRIN-CESS !!!
UNH --!
BURST

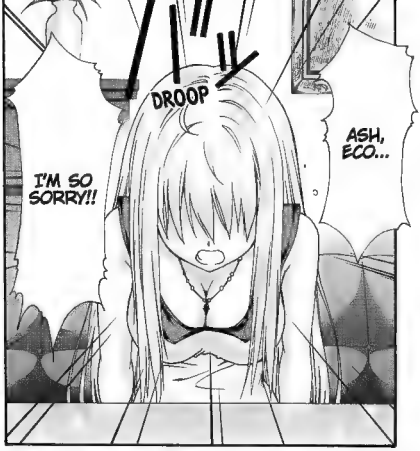
LEAVE HER HIGHNESS TO ME!
ASH, YOU TAKE CARE OF ECO!!
!!
I. REMEMBER...
THIS FEELING SO CLEARLY ...!
NOT LIKE I'LL EVER BE ABLE TO FORGET IT.
I FELT IT FOR THE VERY FIRST TIME SO RECENTLY...
AND NOW, IT'S CARVED RIGHT INTO ME.
FRROOOSH
GAH --!

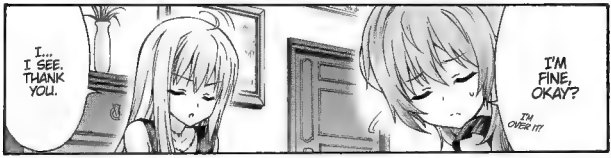
ASH!!
ECO ?!
SHE'S AWAK-ENING!
ECO, YOU MUSTN'T!
NOT IN A PLACE LIKE THIS!
CLOP
UNNGH ...!
FONTAINE SUFFERED SO MUCH DAMAGE.
IF IT HAPPENS AGAIN, THEN...!


STOP IT, ECO!!
YOU'VE GOT TO GO BACK TO NORMAL!!
GRAB
I STILL WANT TO BE WITH YOU...!!
AND...
I LIKE YOU BEST THIS WAY!!
THERE'S ...
NOTHING WRONG WITH YOU THE WAY YOU ARE!!!

HUH?
WHAT HAPPENED TO ME?
KRUSH
HMM ...?
HER FEVER'S... FINALLY GOING DOWN ...!!

NO, IT ISN'T! KNIGHTS HAVE TO OWN UP TO THEIR MISTAKES!
IT'S FINE, PRINCESS.
I'M TRULY SORRY!!


DROOP
I'M SO SORRY!!
ASH, ECO...


I... I SEE. THANK YOU.
I'M FINE, OKAY?
I'M OVER IT!

WHAT --?!

THEN PLEASE, LET ME ASK YOU AGAIN.
TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW ABOUT MY STUFFED DRAGON!

ALL I CAN SAY IS...
I HAD THE FEELING I'D SEEN IT BEFORE SOMEWHERE.
OH ...?
BUT THERE'RE TONS OF STUFFED ANIMALS OUT THERE, RIGHT? ESPECIALLY DRAGON ONES.

NOT IN THIS INSTANCE, ASH.
THIS STUFFED ANIMAL IS ONE OF A KIND.

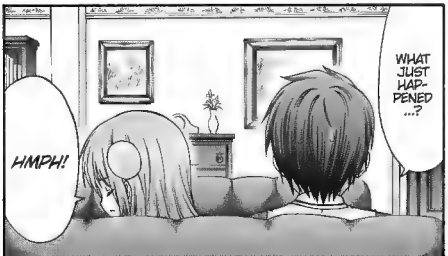
A FAMOUS ARTISAN FROM CHEVRON GAVE IT TO THE PRINCESS AS A GIFT WHEN SHE WAS ONLY FIVE.
AS YOU CAN SEE, IT'S QUITE UNIQUE. IT'S SAFE TO SAY THAT NO ONE EVER MADE IMITATIONS OF IT.
I SUSPECT THAT IF IT WERE OFFERED FOR SALE, IT WOULD EASILY FETCH 5,000,000 ECCLES.
THAT MUCH?!

THE PRINCESS WAS BORN IN THE MONTH OF ARIES AS WELL.
OH, WOW ...!
I DIDN'T KNOW THAT
LEAN
WHEN'S YOUR BIRTHDAY ?!
ASH!!
...!!
MY, WHAT A COINCI-DENCE.
HUH ?!
ER, THE THIRD DAY OF ARIES!
A GIRL ...?!
I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER BEING THE ONE HOLDING IT. A GIRL HAD IT--
BUT... BUT IT WAS JUST A FLEETING IMPRESSION I HAD.

BUT I REMEMBER I WAS STILL SIX YEARS OLD WHEN I LEFT MY VILLAGE...
AND I TURNED SEVEN ON THE JOURNEY TO THE FOREST, SO IT WAS AROUND THEN.
NO, NOT THE EXACT DATE.
SO GIVEN THAT...
CLATTER
DO YOU RECALL EXACTLY WHAT DAY YOU PERFORMED THE ORPHAN CEREMONY?

STAND
WHY DON'T YOU TWO RELAX HERE, HMM?
EXCUSE ME!! I HAVE SOMETHING TO DISCUSS WITH COSETTE!!
PRINCESS --?!

.....


WHAT JUST HAPPENED...?
HMPH!

OH, NOTHING!
SWISH
ECO?
YOU DIDN'T HAVE TO TELL HER ALL OF THAT, DID YOU?
Whisper...
TECH-NICALLY SPEAKING, IT BREAKS THE LAW A TINY BIT, BUT...
I'LL ALWAYS DO ANYTHING WITHIN MY POWER FOR YOU, YOUR HIGHNESS.
THAT'S WHAT I NEED YOU TO DO.
CAN YOU PULL IT OFF?

I LEAVE THIS IN YOUR CAPABLE HANDS, THEN.
YOUR PARTICULAR ABILITIES ARE ESSENTIAL FOR IT TO WORK.
SLIP
BEFORE I GO, PLEASE TAKE THIS.
?

!!
WHILE I'M GONE, YOU AND ASH WILL BE ALONE AT NIGHT ONCE ECO GOES TO SLEEP. ♡
SO I'VE WRITTEN OUT SOME TECHNIQUES FOR SATISFYING A MAN. ♡

WH-WHAT? S-S-S-"SATISFY"?!
FRET FRET
S-SUCH A SHAME-LESS THING TO SAY--!
COSE --?!
GONE

I SUPPOSE THAT NOW...
WELL, I HAVEN'T PREPARED MYSELF FOR ANY OF THIS, BUT...
WAIT... DID SHE LEAVE ALREADY ...?
WHERE DID YOU GO?
IS WHEN ASH AND I...
REALLY START LIVING TOGETHER!

星刻の竜騎士

Chapter XXXVIII
Ash and Sylvia's Study Group
UM...
NOW, LET'S SEE. ONE HEAPING TEASPOON OF SALT...
ONE BAY LEAF...
A "PINCH" ?!
AND A PINCH OF PEPPER...
THAT'S FAR TOO VAGUE! WHAT ARE THEY GETTING AT? EVERYONE'S "PINCH" WOULD BE A DIFFERENT AMOUNT!

AN HOUR AGO...
BUT I PROMISED ASH, SO I'M COMMITTED NOW!
ASH, IT'S ALMOST DINNERTIME, BUT...
I DON'T CARE IF IT'S SOME SPECIAL RECIPE PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE SHELLEY FAMILY!
I'VE NEVER READ A RECIPE IN MY LIFE! WHAT DOES SHE EXPECT ME TO DO WITH THIS?!

OH, ALREADY?
WHAT DO YOU NORMALLY DO FOR MEALS, PRINCESS?

AH... USUALLY COSETTE TAKES CARE OF MEALS.
I wish you the best of luck in battle♪
Your Highness
BUT SHE WAS CALLED AWAY THIS MORNING, UNFORTUNATELY.
GOTCHA.
WELL, IT DOESN'T SEEM FAIR TO EXPECT YOU TO COOK WHEN YOU'RE ALREADY SHARING YOUR HOME.
WHY DON'T WE GET DINNER IN TOWN?

I...
IF YOU... UH... I...
HUMBLE...
SORRY, WHAT?
JUST...
IF YOU DON'T OBJECT TO EATING MY COOKING, THEN...
DECISIVE
I-I-I'D BE DELIGHTED TO COOK FOR YOU!!!
CLEARLY, I GOT AHEAD OF MYSELF.
I'm not at all confident about this.
"THE WAY TO A MAN'S HEART IS THROUGH HIS STOMACH."
OUR FAMILY HAS ALWAYS SWORN BY THAT MOTTO! ♡
WHAT KIND OF "MOTTO" IS THAT?
UM... DO YOU HAVE A MINUTE?
?

ECO?
I... I CAN HELP YOU COOK, IF YOU WANT.
WELL, NO, BUT I HAVE THIS.
HAVE YOU EVER COOKED ANYTHING IN YOUR LIFE?!
IS THAT FROM COSETTE ...?
I have a bad feeling about this...
RUSTLE
!

IT'S NOTHING!
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT
UM? WHAT'S WRONG?
WHY, THAT--!! SO SHE'S NOT ONLY ON MY SIDE, HUH?!
CLENCH
UH-HUH. SHE GAVE IT TO ME BEFORE SHE LEFT.
SHE SAID IT'S A SPECIAL RECIPE THAT'S BEEN HANDED DOWN IN HER FAMILY.
ECO IS A MEMBER OF THE DRAGON TRIBE.
ACTUALLY...
Hey, it's pretty nice in here!
AND COOKING CALLS FOR THAT SORT OF CREATIVITY TOO, SO IF ECO PUT HER MIND TO IT...
IT STANDS TO REASON THAT SHE COULD INTUITIVELY CREATE AN INCREDIBLE DISH!
THEIR ARK DESIGNS DEMONSTRATE THAT THEIR AESTHETIC SENSE IS ON PAR WITH THE GREATEST ARTISTS IN THE WORLD.
AND DRAGONS ARE KNOWN FOR THEIR CREATIVITY AND EXCELLENT TASTE!
For some reason, she's picturing it on Ash.

SERIOUSLY, WHAT'S THE MATTER?
YOU'RE ACTING AWFULLY STRANGE.
Are you all right?
I'M FINE!
AND YES! LET'S MAKE SOMETHING TOGETHER!

TO GO FOR ENDURANCE RIDES WITH LANCELOT THAN DO THINGS LIKE COOK!
I, ON THE OTHER HAND, AM THE SORT WHO FINDS IT FAR EASIER...
AAAARGH!!

YEAH!!
Hmm.
WELL, I DON'T MIND, BUT...

IT SEEMS LIKE WE'RE BOTH COOKING FOR THE FIRST TIME, SO TEAMING UP SOUNDS GREAT!
AND IF IT TURNS OUT WELL, I WON'T BE HUMILIATED IN FRONT OF ASH!

SO!
THERE'S A SPARE APRON AND HAIR CLIP OVER THERE!
OH, OKAY.

CAN YOU...
TIE MY HAIR BACK?
?
UH...
PEEK
OH, OF COURSE.
OH!
I'M THE YOUNGEST PRINCESS...
SO I'VE ALWAYS BEEN LOOKING UP AT MY OLDER SISTERS.
REACH
BUT NOW...
I'M TAKING CARE OF SOMEONE YOUNGER THAN ME.
.....
THIS FEELS SO LOVELY.

I FOUND MYSELF A YOUNGER SISTER, ISN'T IT?
IT'S ALMOST AS IF...

SO, UH...
I HAVE TO ASK...
WHAT... MIGHT THIS BE, EXACTLY ...?
WAFT
DOOOOH

WHAT?!
ARE YOU CRAZY?!
WELL...
IF IT'S NOT TO YOUR TASTE, DON'T FEEL OBLIGED TO EAT IT.
RAWR!

WHAT A RIDICULOUS QUESTION!
IT'S THE MEAL THAT SYLVIA AND I PERSONALLY COOKED!!
.....

GULP...
I SHOULDN'T JUDGE IT BASED ON HOW IT LOOKS, RIGHT?
AND IT DOESN'T ACTUALLY SMELL HORRIBLE.
LET'S THINK ABOUT THIS.
Should dinner be making noise...?
.....
HOW RUDE! I WORKED HARD ON THAT! SO THERE!!
ECO, LOOK AT IT, WILL YOU?! IT'S... I MEAN, ARE YOU EVEN REALLY A DRAGON?!
SO HOW CAN I NOT AT LEAST TRY IT?
TH-THMP TH-THMP
PLUS, THIS IS THE FIRST TIME MY STEED OR MY PRINCESS HAVE SHOWN ME THIS SIDE OF THEMSELVES.
WELL, ASH?!
AHH...
.....!!!
TH-THMP TH-THMP

LOOK ...!
HE LOOKS POSITIVELY TRANS-FIGURED!
SEE, WHAT DID I TELL YOU?!
I KNEW IT'D GO WELL!!
TILT
HUH ?
UM... ASH ...?!!
CRASH
CLATTER
WHEW...
SEE, THERE WAS SOMETHING WRONG WITH IT!!
NOOOOO--!
THAT WAS QUITE THE ORDEAL.

WHAT A HORRIBLE WAY TO RESPOND TO GIRLS COOKING FOR YOU!
DON'T YOU THINK FAINTING WAS UNCALLED FOR, THOUGH?!
HMPH!

AWW, COME ON, ECO. CHEER UP, WILL YOU?
LOOK AT ALL THE GREAT FOOD HERE! THEY EVEN HAVE BEEF FILET!!
SIGH...

I CAN'T SAY I'VE EVER HEARD OF A DRAGONAR DYING FROM FOOD POISONING...
NOW YOU'RE CALLING IT POISON?!
THAT'S DEFINITELY GOING TOO FAR!

ASH!!
NOT EVEN FOR BEEF FILET?!
It's your favorite!

I'M NOT HUNGRY.
.....

DON'T BE SO INSENSITIVE!
ECO'S AN ADOLESCENT GIRL. SHE WON'T ALWAYS FEEL LIKE EATING. LET HER BE!
"AN ADOLESCENT GIRL," HUH...?
DAYDREAMING
SO BEING A GIRL IS TOUGH EVEN FOR MEMBERS OF THE DRAGON TRIBE?
OH! BY THE WAY, UH...
WHY DIDN'T YOU GO HOME FOR SUMMER BREAK, PRINCESS?
UM... WHAT?
ASH...
I FEEL SILLY EVEN ASKING THIS, BUT...
HUH ...?
YOU HAVEN'T FORGOTTEN ABOUT THE MAKEUP EXAMS, HAVE YOU?
EXAMS ...?

SO WE'RE BEING ALLOWED TO MAKE THEM UP OVER SUMMER BREAK!
WE MISSED OUR END-OF-TERM EXAMS WHILE WE WERE IN THE CAPITAL...
OH, NO--- OF COURSE!

IF YOU FAIL THAT, YOU WON'T BE ALLOWED TO TAKE THE PRACTICAL EXAM!
THE WRITTEN EXAM IS IN A WEEK!
OH, ASH, REALLY?! I WAS HOPING I WAS WRONG!
Hey!
WHAT AM I GONNA DO?!
IT TOTALLY SLIPPED MY MIND WHEN I WAS THINKING ABOUT WHETHER TO GO HOME FOR THE SUMMER OR NOT!

HELD BACK
CRUMBLE
CRUMBLE
CRASH
NO WAY...
THE WORST-CASE SCENARIO...!

OH, FINE.
I MAY NOT BE MUCH OF A COOK, BUT I'M EXCELLENT AT STUDYING!
GOOD GRIEF.
DAZE
HOW IS THIS HAPPENING TO ME...?
CLATTER
ACTUALLY, I'M MAKING THIS DECISION! FROM TODAY UNTIL THE EXAM...
IF YOU DON'T MIND, I-- NO!
WELL, I MEAN ...!
HUH?
I WILL...
DA-DAAN
HELP YOU STUDY!!

THE NEXT MORNING.
MM-HMM!!
THIS'LL DO!!
SHALL WE BEGIN, ASH?
CRISP
ARE YOU READY?!
Y-YES!
TH THMP
HEY!! ARE YOU LISTENING?!
LEAN
Zz
OH MAN, SHE'S TOTALLY INTO THIS.
SHE EVEN PUT GLASSES ON!
I GUESS SHE LIKES TO START BY DRESSING THE PART.

LISTEN UP! YOU MAY BE AN OFFICER OF THE STUDENT COUNCIL NOW, BUT...
EVERYONE STILL KNOWS YOU AS THE SCHOOL PROBLEM CHILD!
ROAR!
JUST IMAGINE IF YOUR GRADES DROP NOW!
THINK HOW AWFUL THAT WOULD MAKE THE PRESIDENT LOOK, AFTER SHE WENT OUT ON A LIMB TO GET YOU INVOLVED!!
WE'LL START BY REVIEWING DRAGON ECOLOGY!!
HEY! ASH!
ARE YOU LISTEN-ING TO A WORD I'M SAYING?!

NOT... REALLY?
HOW CAN I POSSIBLY CONCENTRATE IN THIS SITUATION...?
WELL, WHY NOT?! I'M TRYING TO MAKE IT AS EASY TO UNDERSTAND AS POSSIBLE!
UNNNH ...!
MUMBLE
ROLL
ITCH
AHH... AHHH...
ACHOOOOO!!
GUST
YIKES ?!
TUMBLE
TUMBLE...
NGH...

HUH ...?
EEEEEEK!!

AHEM!
AS I THOUGHT ...
STANDING AND WALKING AROUND AIMLESSLY WAS FOOLISH.
WE'LL SIT AND DO THIS CALMLY AND QUIETLY.
I DON'T THINK STUDYING SHOULD INCLUDE GETTING BEATEN UP
YES, MA'AM.

Hmmm...
SO THAT MEANS... ABOUT THE MOTHER DRAGON?
SO LET'S CUT STRAIGHT TO THE MAIN FOCUS OF THE TEST!
I GUESS THE THING TO DO IS HAMMER AS MANY KEY CONCEPTS INTO YOUR HEAD AS POSSIBLE FIRST.
WE'LL PROBABLY HAVE MORE TROUBLE STUDYING ONCE ECO WAKES UP.
AND I EVEN READ THE TEXTBOOK, BUT I STILL DIDN'T REALLY LEARN ANYTHING SPECIFIC ABOUT HER.
I LISTENED TO THE CLASS LECTURES AND DISCUSSIONS...
I ONCE PERFORMED AN INDEPENDENT STUDY ON HER AND EVERYTHING...
THAT'S NOT TERRIBLY SURPRISING! WE STILL KNOW SO LITTLE ABOUT THE MOTHER DRAGON, REALISTICALLY.
BUT I DIDN'T LEARN MUCH MORE THAN IS IN OUR TEXTBOOK.
SHE'S FUNDAMENTALLY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER DRAGONS, AND BESIDES, DRAGONARS ONLY MEET HER ONCE IN OUR LIVES!

BLUSH
FEMALE?
WELL? WHICH IS IT?
HUH ...?
IS LANCE-LOT...
MALE OR...
BUT THAT SHOULD MEAN THE TEST ONLY COVERS WHAT'S IN THE TEXT-BOOKS...
SO YOU SHOULD BE FINE AS LONG AS YOU REMEMBER EVERYTHING YOU READ.
NOW, HERE'S A QUESTION!
GRAWR!
A POP QUIZ, HUH?
UM... THAT'S A TOUGH ONE. GOING BY THE NAME, I'D ASSUMED MALE...
BUT IF YOU'RE ASKING... COULD LANCELOT BE FEMALE?
IDIOT! HOW CAN YOU KNOW SO LITTLE AFTER SO LONG IN SCHOOL?!
THE CORRECT ANSWER IS NEITHER!!
HUH?! REALLY?!
BUT IN ALL THE OLD PICTURE BOOKS, I'M SURE I READ THAT--
LONG AGO, THERE CERTAINLY WERE MALE AND FEMALE DRAGONS.

BUT...
AFTER MANY, MANY YEARS...
AND HAVING BEEN DRIVEN NEARLY TO EXTINCTION, THE DRAGONS DEVELOPED A SPECIAL MAGIC.
BLUUSH
BACK THEN, THEY...
THEY DID INDEED... REPRODUCE... BY COPULA-TION...
.....
THE MAGIC OF THE WISE DRAGON KING.
IT ENABLED THEM TO REMAKE THEMSELVES!
THE MOTHER DRAGON WAS ENTRUSTED WITH THE TASK OF BREEDING THEIR SPECIES...
AND NEW-BORNS NO LONGER HAD INDIVIDUAL SEXES AT ALL.

I SEE.
HERE I AM A DRAGONAR, AND I HAD NO IDEA.
HOW SAD IS THAT?
BUT... WAIT, HANG ON!
WHAT IS IT?
ACCORDING TO WHAT DR. CORNWELL SAID...
ECO'S ALMOST ENTIRELY A HUMAN GIRL, ISN'T SHE?
.....!!

I'M NOT EVEN SURE IF IT'S JUST SUPER-FICIAL...
OR IF SHE'S A WOMAN THROUGH AND THROUGH...!
BUT WHAT I CAN SAY, WITH ABSOLUTELY CERTAINTY...
THAT'S TRUE!
I WONDER HOW THAT NEVER STRUCK ME UNTIL NOW?
IS THAT ECO IS...
BECOMING MORE FEMININE ALL THE TIME.
OH!
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, SOMETHING ABOUT HER HAS CHANGED LATELY.
AT FIRST, I CHALKED IT UP TO HER JUST GROWING UP.

TWINGE
BUT, OH MAN... HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO HANDLE IT IF SHE JUST KEEPS GETTING MORE AND MORE FEMININE...?
ON TOP OF HER TAKING ON A DRAGON'S SHAPE...
"BECOMING MORE FEMININE"...
HAVE YOU REALLY NOT FIGURED IT OUT, ASH?
I THINK THERE ARE STILL COUNTLESS THINGS ABOUT HER THAT WE HAVEN'T LEARNED YET.
THE WAY I SEE IT...
THE REASON ECO'S CHANGING LIKE THAT...

PART OF HER EXISTENCE NOW.
IS BECAUSE YOU ARE...
DRAGON'S WORK-SHOP.
HEE HEE!
AS I'D EXPECT FROM THE KNIGHT OF AVALON... HIS RELATIONSHIPS WITH WOMEN KEEP ON GET-TING MORE COMPLICATED, DON'T THEY?

IT'S TIME FOR ME TO PUT IN AN APPEARANCE.
FLICK
NOW, THEN...
YOU MUST ALL...
LEARN THE TRUTH.

星刻の竜騎士

Chapter
XXXIV
A Visitor During Exam Preparations!

HEY, PRprincess?
SINCE WE'RE TAKING A BREAK, MIND IF I ASK YOU SOMETHING?
IT'S ABOUT YOUR ORPHAN CEREMONY.
ER...
THAT STUFFED ANIMAL TIES INTO IT, RIGHT?
GOODNESS, HE'S SO BLUNT...
ALL RIGHT, I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT.

I TOLD YOU SOME OF THE STORY THE OTHER DAY.
BUT THE THING IS, WHEN I GOT LOST IN THE FOREST, A BOY CAME TO MY RESCUE.
I WAS INJURED AND COULDN'T WALK, SO HE PIGGYBACKED ME THROUGH THE TREES...
AND HELPED ME SEARCH FOR THE MOTHER DRAGON.
AND YOU NEVER ASKED WHAT HIS NAME WAS?
I DON'T KNOW.
I REMEMBER MEETING THE MOTHER DRAGON, BUT MY OTHER MEMORIES OF THE DAY ARE FUZZY.
IF I KNEW HIS NAME THEN, I DON'T NOW.

THAT SAID...
I... I WASN'T CHOSEN TO BE A BREEDER.
THERE'S ONE MORE THING I DO REMEMBER.
BUT THE BOY RENOUNCED HIS CLAIM TO LANCELOT AND GAVE IT TO ME INSTEAD!
WHAT ...?!
THE TRUTH IS, LANCELOT WAS ORIGINALLY MEANT TO HAVE BEEN HIS STEED.
IF THAT BOY HADN'T BEEN THERE, I WOULDN'T BE WHO I AM TODAY.
BUT...THAT MEANS THE BOY DIDN'T BECOME A BREEDER...?
I ASSUME NOT.

WELL, FOR ALL THAT ECO'S A HANDFUL, I'VE GOT HER!
SO WE CAN SCRATCH ME OFF THE LIST OF POSSI-BILITIES!
HEH HEH! LET ME GUESS-- WAS THAT BOY YOUR FIRST LOVE, PRINCESS?
WH...
WHAT ?!!
BLUSH
IF YOU'VE GOT THE BRAIN POWER TO COME UP WITH LUDICROUS IDEAS LIKE THAT, MAYBE YOU SHOULD MEMORIZE SOME NEW VOCAB WORDS!!
CRAAASH
S-SORRY --!
.....

A WEEK LATER.
WOULD LIKE TO... TO PROPOSE A TOAST TO OUR PASSING THE WRITTEN EXAM...!
YEAH!
WOO!
IF... IF YOU DON'T MIND, I-I, SYLVIA LALITREA-MONT...
Dragon Fa
Pavilion
THERE'S NO NEED BE SO FORMAL.
IT'S JUST THE THREE OF US HERE
R-RIGHT. WELL, THEN, UH... CHEERS.
C'MON, ECO. YOU TOO!
CLINK
CLINK
NNGH.

SIGH...
SHE'S BEEN LIKE THIS FOR A WHILE NOW.
GLANCE
.....
O-OH, RIGHT! IS THERE ANYPLACE IN PARTICULAR YOU'D LIKE TO GO DO OUR PRACTICAL EXAM, PRINCESS?!
HMM? NOT PARTICULARLY.
THERE ARE A FEW PLACES I WOULDN'T MIND GOING TO, BUT...
!!
OH MY GOSH!! WHAT, ARE THE TWO OF YOU GOING SOMEWHERE TOGETHER?
YOU TWO HAVE BEEN SNEAKING OFF AND LEAVING ME OUT OF THINGS A LOT LATELY!
DON'T THINK I HAVEN'T NOTICED!
NO, WE WEREN'T TRYING TO EXCLUDE YOU!
WE WERE JUST STUDYING FOR EXAMS, THAT'S ALL!
THAT'S RIGHT!
BESIDES, THIS TIME YOU'RE COMING TOO, ECO!

THE GIST IS, WE AGREE ON A DESTINATION...
AND THEN FLY THERE TO OBTAIN THE LOCAL SPECIALTY PRODUCTS TO BRING HOME.
YES--BOTH YOU AND LANCELOT. WE'RE GOING TO HAVE A LITTLE EXCURSION ON DRAGONBACK!
I AM?
THAT'S WHAT THE PRACTICAL EXAM ENTAILS.
HMM.
BUT WHY DO THE TWO OF YOU HAVE TO DO THAT TOGETHER?
HMM... I SEE.
THE RULES DICTATE THAT WE DO IT AS A TEAM, FOR SAFETY REASONS!!
AND SINCE ASH AND I ARE THE ONLY TWO TAKING THE MAKEUP EXAMS, WELL....
BUT I CAN'T CARRY YOU ON MY BACK AT ALL!

I CAN'T EVEN TRANSFORM WHEN I WANT TO!
OH!
DON'T SWEAT IT, ECO!
.....!
IT'LL BE FINE.
THE Pprincess AND LANCELOT HAVE AGREED TO GIVE US A RIDE!
ASH, MAYBE DON'T MENTION--
?!
GATTER
IN THAT CASE, IT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER IF I'M THERE, DOES IT?!
SO I'M WORTHLESS AS A HUMAN AND A DRAGON!!
DART
ECO --!!!

YEAH, I KNOW.
!
YOU COULD'VE HANDLED THE SITUATION WITHOUT SAYING THAT TO HER!
ECO HAS HER DIGNITY AS A DRAGON, ASH!
DASH
H-HEY! ASH!
BUT I...
.....
MUMUR
MUMUR...
WHAT'S GOING ON OVER THERE?

HEY, ECO!!
WHAT DO YOU WANT?! GO AWAY!
!
LIFT
I'M IN A REALLY LOUSY MOOD RIGHT NOW, OKAY?!
BUT I'VE GOT SOME ANSAR WINE FROM THEIR NEW MENU HERE...
SO MAYBE I SHOULD HAVE SOME, HMM?
H-HEY! ANSAR'S BAD FOR YOU--!
LUNGE
LEAVE ME ALONE!!
THIS IS FOR ME!!

AH --!!
GULP
HEE HEE...
SMASH
IT'S JUST LIKE YOU EXPECTED, HUH?
BECAUSE... I'M ALWAYS LIKE THIS, RIGHT?
I... I ALWAYS CAUSE TROUBLE FOR YOU WHEN IT MATTERS MOST.

I STILL ONLY CAUSED PROBLEMS FOR YOU.
YOU'RE WRONG, ECO!!!
SAME WITH COOKING...
I'VE NEVER EVEN...MADE A BEAUTIFUL ARK...ALL BY MYSELF.
AND EVEN... EVEN WHEN I FINALLY BECAME A REAL DRAGON IN THE CAPITAL...
YOU'VE GOT IT COMPLETELY BACKWARD!
I ASKED THE PRINCESS TO LET US RIDE WITH HER DURING THE PRACTICAL EXAM, BECAUSE...
!!!

I DON'T HAVE ANY CONFIDENCE IN MYSELF ...!!

JUST YOUR EXISTENCE IS... I CAN'T EVEN WRAP MY HEAD AROUND IT!
YOU'RE SO AMAZING, ECO.

.....
DRONE!...
CONFI-DENCE ...?

BUT I'M STILL NOWHERE NEAR BEING A KNIGHT OF AVALON!
THAT TITLE MEANS NOTHING UNTIL I'M A REAL PARTNER TO MY STEED!

AND BECAUSE OF YOU, I'VE GOTTEN TO BE A HERO A BUNCH OF TIMES...

YOU'RE ALWAYS HELPING ME OUT WITH ABILITIES THAT NORMAL DRAGONS DON'T EVEN HAVE.

AND TO BE HONEST, WHEN IT COMES TO YOUR DRAGON FORM, I WANTED SO BADLY TO FACE THAT CHALLENGE WITH YOU...
BUT I CAN'T FIND THE CONFIDENCE--- NOT WITH THE WAY PRINCESS MIRABELLE AND PRINCESS VERONICA AND EVERYONE IN FONTAINE LOOKED AT ME!
SO I DECIDED TO RELY ON PRINCESS SYLVIA INSTEAD, SO YOU'D NEVER HAVE TO GO THROUGH THE STRESS OF TRANSFORMING AGAIN!
THAT'S WHY I ASKED IF WE COULD RIDE WITH HER...!!
.....
THE TRUTH IS...
I WISH I COULD BRAG ABOUT YOU TO ABSOLUTELY EVERYONE!
ASH...
OOF...
HUH?

IT'S NO USE.
CLING
WHA --?! HEY!
I... I CAN'T STOP MYSELF ANYMORE!
AWW, CRAP! DID THE ALCOHOL GET TO YOU ALREADY?!
HUFF...
ASH...
ASH ...!
SLIP
I...
I DON'T WANT...
YOU TO EVER LOOK AT ANYONE BUT ME!

S-SLOW DOWN!
WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO YOU, ECO?!
I...
I LOVE YOU.

ACK!
PRINCESS?!
IT...IT'S NOT WHAT YOU THINK! ECO HAD SOME ANSAR WINE, AND--!
HEY --!
WHAT ARE YOU TWO DOING?!
THAT MAY BE, BUT...
Nice, man!
Oohhh --!
UM... ASH, I...
I WANT SOME-THING...
HUH ...?
SWEAT SWEAT
YIKES! IF THE GIRLS' LOOKS COULD KILL...
THIS IS BAD.

I WANT...
FWUMP
YOUR... BABY...
ASH...

SO... YEAH.

I GUESS WE WON'T...
BE WELCOME BACK AT THE DRAGON FANG ANYTIME SOON.
SPLAASH
AFTER ECO SAID THAT, I GOT CHEWED OUT BY THE PRINCESS...
YELLED AT BY THE MANAGER OF THE DRAGON FANG, AND MOCKED BY THE CUSTOMERS.
I'VE NEVER SEEN ECO SO DRUNK.
UNLESS... THAT WASN'T JUST THE ANSAR TALKING...?
"I WANT...
"YOUR BABY, ASH."
IMAGINE

EEEEEEP!
THE FACT THAT...
I'M HUMAN AND SHE'S A DRAGON --!!
SPLOSH
B-BUT THERE'S NO WAY AROUND...
THAT HAS TO MEAN...
HAVING A BABY TOGETHER...
WOULD BE IMPOS-SIBLE, RIGHT..?
WELL...
YOU NEVER KNOW UNTIL YOU TRY...!
HUH?

WH-WHAT?!
I THOUGHT YOU WERE STILL ASLEEP!
AND...AND I THOUGHT THE PRINCESS WAS RIGHT THERE WITH YOU!!
RATTLE
ECO ?!!
E...

IF YOU MEAN THAT GIRL...
SHE WAS NAPPING, LAST I SAW.
Upsy-daisy!
WHO, SYLVIA?

LISTEN, ASH...
ECO DOESN'T USUALLY REFER TO THE PRINCESS LIKE THAT...
HUH? "THAT GIRL"?
YOU DO KNOW THAT...
I DON'T MIND YOU SEEING ME LIKE THIS, RIGHT?
SO, WHY WON'T YOU LOOK AT ME?
OB...
OBVI-OUSLY, I CAN'T!
HMMM...
SPLISH
BUT...

IF YOU DON'T TURN AROUND...
HOW CAN WE RUN OUR LITTLE EXPERIMENT ...?
DON'T!
QUIT IT!
WHAT'S GOING ON HERE? ECO'S NOT TALKING LIKE HERSELF AT ALL.
HEE HEE!
CUTE AS ALWAYS, AREN'T YOU...?

YOU...
OH! I GET IT!
YOU'RE NAVI, AREN'T YOU?!
MY, MY. YOU'RE ABSOLUTELY RIGHT.
I WOULDN'T HAVE EXPECTED YOU TO BE SO... OBSERVANT... IN THIS SITUATION.
GIVE ME A BREAK!
AND YOU'RE USING ECO'S BODY?! DO YOU REALLY THINK IT'S OKAY TO PULL SOMETHING LIKE THIS WITH IT?!

WHAT ABOUT WHAT SHE WANTS?!
WELL, IT'S TRUE THAT RIGHT NOW WE'RE SEPARATE ENTITIES.
WHAT SHE WANTS, HMM?
RIGHT NOW ...?
YOU'RE AWARE, AREN'T YOU...
THAT I'M THE DRAGON-WEISS?
AND ONE DAY, WHEN ECO'S ALL GROWN UP, I'LL MERGE WITH HER.
I'LL BECOME A BODY OF INFORMATION, AND MY WISHES WILL MELT AWAY INTO HER. ALL WILL BE AS IT SHOULD BE.
.....!
AND YOU'LL... WHAT?!

ARE YOU SAYING THAT WHEN YOU TWO MERGE...
YOU'LL DISAPPEAR, NAVI...?!
YES, OF COURSE.
WHY IN THE WORLD WOULD AN ENCYCLOPEDIA REQUIRE SENTIENCE?
SO I'LL VANISH, EXACTLY AS I WAS MADE TO.
BUT... BUT THAT'S EVEN WORSE, ISN'T IT?!
ECO ISN'T THE ONLY ONE YOU SHOULD VALUE!
YOU NEED TO VALUE YOUR-SELF TOO!
.....

MY, MY.
YOU'RE A PECULIAR KNIGHT IN EVERY WAY, AREN'T YOU?
THAT MAKES ME SO HAPPY.
BUT...
WE SEEM TO HAVE GOTTEN A BIT SIDE-TRACKED.
HUH?

I'M NOT ONLY HERE TO TEASE YOU, ASH.
I HAVE A MESSAGE TO RELAY...
FROM THE MOTHER DRAGON.
SHE SAYS, "ENTER ALBION FOREST FOR AN AUDIENCE WITH ME."

THE MOTHER DRAGON...
SAID THAT TO ME?!

YOU MEAN I'LL GET TO MEET HER?!!
SPLOOSH
YES. THAT'S RIGHT. SHE WISHES TO SEE YOU.
OH MY, WHAT A LOVELY VIEW! ♡

I SEE.
THERE'S... THERE'S SOMETHING I WANT TO ASK HER ABOUT-- ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED WHEN I WAS A KID.

AND...
I DOUBT I'M THE ONLY ONE WITH QUESTIONS FOR HER.
THE PRINCESS AND ECO...
PROBABLY DO TOO.
OH, GOOD.
IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN, YOU HAVE AN EXAM COMING UP, RIGHT? THAT GIVES YOU AMPLE OPPORTUNITY TO VISIT.
I SEE.
YOU'RE RIGHT!

Oh, right!
SPLASH
ACK!
WILL YOU PLEASE HURRY AND GET OUT OF HERE?!
NOW, I'M QUITE SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO HELP GUIDE YOU AGAIN...
BUT I'M NOT SO SURE I CAN HELP YOU EXPLAIN THIS SITUATION TO ANYONE. ♡

THIS COULD BE A REALLY GOOD THING!
BUT... I SEE.

ALBION FOREST!!!
FOR OUR PRACTICAL EXAM, WE'LL BE GOING TO...
to be continued.

AFTERWORD

It's me, RAN.

Starting in this volume, Lucca as we know her in the manga bears the very least resemblance to the Lucca in the original version of the story! *laughs*

I've made even more adjustments and rearrangements to the story here than I did earlier in the Lucca Arc. So for those of you who're fans of the original, please keep an eye out to see if you pick up on all the differences!

On that note, the Lucca Arc will continue in the next volume. I'd be thrilled if you picked it up!

Having been summoned by the Mother Dragon, who grants dragon larva to chosen humans...
BLUSH
In the next volume...
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LOST AND FOUND...

Ash, Eco, and Sylvia are back in Ansullivan after the confrontation with Mordred, but that doesn't mean things are back to normal. The truth about Eco's dragon form has to be kept secret, and a new headmistress is at the academy to keep an eye on them—but she may have a hidden agenda.

When Ash and Eco wind up needing to stay in Sylvia's residence, they find a stuffed dragon from Sylvia's childhood. What does it mean, and how will its discovery impact the bond between the three friends?

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